

Help for the Gender Confused

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Prefatory Disclaimer - 2

Chapter 1: What I Mean by Gender Confusion - 3

Chapter 2: Purpose for the Gender Confused - 7

Chapter 3: Help for the Gender Confused - 13

Chapter 4: Hope for the Gender Confused - 21

Prefatory Disclaimer

This pamphlet was written in a single day, and is based on a pair of sermons delivered to Open Door Baptist Church of Mayfield Kentucky on February 18th 2018. It is intended to be a quick, and accessible introduction to the issues surrounding transgenderism for busy pastors. It is by no means exhaustive, and is not a replacement for further study of what the scripture has to say on these matters.

If you are reading this as a transgender individual then I think it would be most beneficial for you to read the last chapter first. I send this out to you with full confidence that the Spirit of Christ has revealed His love for sinners such as us in the scriptures found there. I pray that by His hand of mercy He will also bring you into the fellowship of the saints in Love.

Chapter 1

What I Mean by Gender Confusion

Genesis 1:27

“So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.”

Within the last decade or so we have seen an alarming phenomena thrown into the spotlight; that is the transgender acceptance movement. If you’re reading this pamphlet then chances are you already know a little about what that is, and so feel free to skip this chapter. However, if you’re not completely sure you understand what transgenderism is then please read through to the end as some of the points made here may not make sense without this knowledge.

To understand the meaning of “transgender” we first have to understand how some people conceive of “sex” as distinct from “gender.” For these people, “sex” is defined in biological terms, what sexual anatomy an individual is born with, and “gender” is defined in social terms, the subjective experience and social norms associated with being masculine or feminine. For the most part in people these two realities line up with each other, but in the case of the “transgendered” their sexual

anatomy does not line up with their experience of gender. A person who is biologically born male may have the inner experience of being female, and vice-versa for a biological female. The experience of dis-congruity between a persons sex, and their gender can also be said to exist in a spectrum from more feminine to more masculine experience. Though the typical designations are trans-woman, for a male who feels their self a woman, and trans-man, for a female who feels their self a man.

Because of this dis-congruity many people suffer distress, and seek to alleviate their pain through “transitioning.”

Transitioning is the process of trying to become the opposite sex. This is typically first done by the trans-person presenting themselves as the opposite sex in a social context. This can involve changing their name, cross-dressing, and pursuing relationships. The transition process also typically involves medical intervention like hormone replacement therapy, and cosmetic surgery. The medical intervention sometimes culminates an invasive sex reassignment surgery (SRS) where the sexual anatomy of the patient is modified to approximate

the anatomy, and functions of the opposite sex. Such measures can be harmful, and at this time are not completely reversible.

Transgender people often feel that they are without hope, and so resort to risky behaviors to grasp desperately for help. The 2015 U.S. Transgender survey found that 12% of transgender people polled had done sex work for income at some time in their life. The study also found that 40% of transgender people polled had attempted suicide in their life. This is nearly nine times that of the general U.S. population.

This is a hurting, and confused community. It may be more comfortable to ignore them, it may be easier to foster hatred for them, but if we are Christians then we know that would be a terrible sin. The scripture tells us that God made all mankind in His own image, and that He calls all of us to display that image in ourselves. Part of what that means is setting right the distorted image of God in others just as Christ did for us. As we read Christ say in John 17:19 *“for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth.”* While you read the rest of this short pamphlet let these words sanctify you to the task of sanctifying those caught in this gender confusion.

Chapter 2

Purpose for the Gender Confused

Psalms 139:14-16

"I will praise thee; for I am fearfully and wonderfully made: marvellous are thy works; and that my soul knoweth right well. My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth.

Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."

The Psalmist here gives to God great honor, and worship for His work in creating him. Everywhere we turn in the scriptures God is extolled as the chief architect of mankind, and thus as the one who gives mankind his purpose. Here in Psalm 139 we read of two concepts used to this end, that God has made us “fearfully” and “wonderfully and marvelously”. I would like us to take these ideas in reverse order, and see how they apply to the question of gender.

First, the word here used for how we are made “wonderfully,” and of the “marvelous” work of God in making us “palah” which means something like “to make distinguished by separation”. This means that God has set us

aside to His own good purposes as individuals, and to this end He has made each of us in the way which He sees fit. This includes the kind of body which we have been given as we read in verses 15-16 *“My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret... Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written...”* God ordered every aspect of our bodies, as properly functioning, by His providence. He did this so that we would be able to carry out the task which He has for us. This includes the sex which we have properly been born into, as we read in Mark 10:6-8 *“from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female.”*

Second, the word used for our being “fearfully” made, which is “yare”, is a straight forward parallel to the word it’s translated as. It means to have fearful reverence, or to have holy respect towards. It has to do with the fact that God has made us, that we had nothing to do with it, and that we have a duty to live consistently within the confines of how He has made us. We did not have any choice as to how God would bring us into the world as Isaiah 45:9-10 says *“Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the*

potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou? or thy work, He hath no hands? Woe unto him that saith unto his father, What begettest thou? or to the woman, What hast thou brought forth?" God, as the one who formed us, has the absolute right to make us according to his will. He is the one who makes one a man, and another a woman. What right do we have to question God's choice concerning us? And not only do we have no right to question, but we have an obligation to live in conformity to this truth

In the beginning of man, God taught Adam that, because he was man, he was not to relate toward the animals in the same way as toward his soon to be wife Eve, Genesis 2:19-20 says *"out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof... but for Adam there was not found an helper meet for him."* Right from the beginning we have God teaching Adam that he was to behave in conformity with that which was by nature. After God showed Adam this, He then showed him how he was to relate, as a man, to his wife, as a woman. In Genesis 2:22 & 24 we

read “*the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man... Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.*” The man’s role here is different from the woman’s. The Man is to “leave, and cleave” while the woman is given to the man. These are the active, and passive roles which have classically been identified as masculine, and feminine right here in the first marriage.

So what does all this all mean? It means that God has made man, and woman to play different but complimentary roles in relating to each other. The problem with pursuing to transition from one gender to another is that it runs right up against the purpose which God has made us for as individuals. It is ultimately an attempt to set oneself up in place of Him in our lives. This is exactly the sin of idolatry which we read of in Romans 1:23 how men “*changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man*”

This no doubt is bad news for those who have sinned in this way, but by the same principle it is good news! Because God has set forth this standard for us to follow, we have it as a guide

post to lead us back to His purpose for us. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

Chapter 3

Help for the Gender Confused

Romans 12:1-2 KJV

“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”

Counseling those who are caught in the lie of self idolatry and are seeking gender transition is a difficult task because it is an issue of self-identity. The counselor, and the counseled must share a common view of the proper source of identity, and authority in order to begin the healing process. That is why the apostle begins our passage with *“I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God”*. In this petition we have two assumptions; that God is merciful, and that both the counselor and counseled are recipients of this mercy. In other words we are talking first about a gospel issue, and whether the counseling process is being done within the context of forgiveness in Christ.

When we talk to the gender confused we must first know for ourselves whether we are in submission to Christ. In Matthew 7:3 Christ says to would-be counselors “*why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye?*” If we are in grave sins then we must forsake them, and seek the forgiveness of Christ first. And, if we are conscious of no sins to repent of, we must begin by recognizing that we have needed, and always will need the forgiveness of Christ ourselves. Galatians 6:1 tells counselors to restore the sinner “*in the spirit of meekness*” while “*considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*” This is an explicit recognition of our need for personal forgiveness, and transformation from Christ.

In ministering the gospel to the gender confused we also have to apply the same gospel that has saved us to the life of the counseled. This part of counseling will mostly take place outside of the office, and in the context of everyday life. Without the forgiveness of sins, and the indwelling of the Holy Ghost there is no true deliverance from sin. John 8:34 says that “*Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin*” showing us that the problem of sin is one of enslavement to it. Without the

regenerating work of the Gospel, there is no way to escape sin. This is not to say that people do not change, but that they will ultimately be bound to the same master unless they are freed by Christ. If we attempt to help the gender confused without bringing them to faith in Christ, we may be able to get them to stop cross dressing, taking hormones, and desiring transition surgery. Nonetheless we will not be freeing them from the root problem, and that root will continue to lead them into other self-destructive behaviors. But Jesus also said in John 8:36 "If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." By leading the gender confused to Jesus Christ they will be freed from their sin, and we will have attained the resources we need to begin to help them.

The second section of our text tells us the method by which to help the counselee change their desires, and behaviors, granted that they have believed the gospel. The pattern here is threefold; "presenting to God," "transforming the mind," and "proving God's will".

The first step is to admonish the counselee to present, or dedicate themselves to the good pleasure of God. The language

used here is very specific. They are called to present themselves as a “living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God.” They need to begin seeing their entire life as being for the singular purpose of pleasing God, just like the sacrifices of old. In fact they may please Him more than sacrifices, for *"Hath the LORD as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the LORD? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams."* 1 Samuel 15:22. This is a complete flip from the idolatrous attitude of transgenderism. Under that way of life the entire focus is on the individual, but the Christian life ought be one of complete self-denial for the sake of pleasing God. Without prior conversion to Christ this would be impossible.

The way that this vow of self sacrifice is actually fulfilled then is by the next step in our passage *"and be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind."* First, they must cease to conform to the sinful contexts they have been in. It is a well known fact that we often find ourselves becoming like the people, and material we associate with. It is also true that it is hard to change for the better while still within sinful contexts. 1 Corinthians 15:33 says *"Be not*

deceived: evil communications corrupt good manners.”

meaning that habitually communing in sinful contexts hinders progress towards a holy lifestyle. We must then help our counselees identify those influences which cause them to fall into sinful patterns of thought. A good first step might be to help them sort through their social media subscriptions by replacing pro-transgender groups with devotional groups, and such like changes to minimize exposure to temptation. Another change would be to view time spent with pro-transgender friends as an evangelistic opportunity instead of recreation. They may also need to restructure their lives in other ways, such as acquiring clothes which conform to the social norms associated with their birth sex. We must be sensitive to the individual nuances of a counselees context in order to reduce exposure to temptation.

Next, we must call on the counselee to *“be transformed by the renewing of their mind.”* This is the part where all the positive change will take place. Transformation in behavior is achieved as the mind is renewed. The sinful ways that a counselee habitually thinks about their relationship to their gender must be replaced with God-centered thinking on the

matter. This, of course, must begin by teaching them the scriptural principals which relate to gender (see chapter 2). Scripture memory homework can be prescribed to this end as Psalms 119:11 says “Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.”

In a counseling session, directed questions should be asked to uncover the sinful thought patterns, or automatic thoughts, which have to do with gender. Some thoughts which the gender confused may have are; “I can’t be a *-birth sex*” “Why can’t I be a *-opposite sex*” or “I hate my *-sexual anatomy*.” Thoughts like these must be identified, and God centered thoughts must be constructed to replace them throughout the day. So as a godly foil to our first list we have; “God made me as a *-birth sex*” “God loves me as a *-birth sex*” and “God wonderfully made my *-sexual anatomy*- so that I can glorify Him.” A list of thought pairs with scripture can then be put together, and constantly added to. This list can then be studied by the counselee so that they can learn to catch themselves in sinful thoughts, and overcome them by God-glorifying thoughts. As 2 Corinthians 10:4-5 says “*the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling*

down of strong holds; Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;”

The final section of the passage we began this chapter with reads *“that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.”* This teaches us that the goal of the counselee in seeking to be out from under the influence of gender confusion ought to be so that they can serve the Lord with their lives. Incrementally, and all throughout the counseling process, opportunities for the counselee to serve Christ should be pursued. They might begin by seeking to be reconciled to any family their sin affected, and using that occasion to minister the gospel to them. Over time, as their condition improves, more responsibility should be given to them.

The biblical pattern for this is that the healing process should take place in the context of the local church. As Hebrews 10:24-25 says *“let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the*

assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another.” God has designed us to live, and grow in community. We must not be too suspicious of allowing those who are still in the process of leaving their transgenderism behind to come into our churches. They will not be able to take on much responsibility until they have shown themselves to be faithful, but that does not mean they should be stuck in a corner by themselves. They should be welcomed into the congregation as brothers and sisters whom God has loved, and called into His service. Who are we to argue with God?

Chapter 4

Hope for the Gender Confused

Isaiah 43:5-7

“Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west;

I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth;

Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”

While in the last chapters I have spoken mostly to pastors, in this chapter I would like to chiefly address the transgender individuals who are realizing the gravity of their circumstances, and their sinfulness before God. I would like to start by saying that I too am a sinner every bit as much as you, and while we have not done the same things in our lives we are nonetheless both wicked. God has told us that *“There is none righteous, no, not one: There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God.”* in Romans 3:10-11. That means that I have no right over you to condemn you, but that God has the right to condemn us both. Romans 1:18 tells us that *“the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and*

unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;” If God were to judge us by what we have done with the good gifts He’s given us then we’d be doomed to everlasting destruction from His presence.

But God has still loved humanity, and has made a way that He can keep His judgment off of us. That is why He let His Son, Jesus, die on the cross. Instead of letting His judgment come against us, He let it fall on Him. Even though Jesus had never sinned, and had always done what His heavenly Father asked of Him, He went willingly to His death. Isaiah 53:6-7&10 says *“All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth... Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the LORD shall prosper in his hand.”* Even though all humanity deserved to die for their sins Jesus took that death on Himself.

What this means for you, and me is that if we entrust the task of saving us to Jesus then He can let us go free. He will write our sins on His account on the cross, and write His obedience to our account. He can fully forgive us of all the evil we've done in our lives. As Romans 10:9-11 says *"if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed."* Can you imagine being without guilt, and shame over sin? That is what Christ offers you now. And not only that, but freedom from a life of slavery to sin!

You may be thinking "I've already damaged my body too much. I can't ever be free from this." but Christ has one more trick up His sleeve for you. At the beginning of this chapter you read a passage *"Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west; I will say to the north, Give up; and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from far, and my daughters from the ends of the earth; Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created*

him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him.”

On the last day, at the resurrection of the dead, Christ will call all His people out of the graves, and He will finally perfect us as we ought to be. Both in our soul, and our bodies as 1 Corinthians 15:53 says “*For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.*”

You will be restored as the son, or daughter God has destined you to be. So do not let the scars of your past keep you from coming to faith in Jesus. Scars like these are the reason we need Christ to heal us.

